

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-17 (Cancelled)

18. (Withdrawn/Currently amended) A method for the treatment of short stature in a subject suspected of having a genetic defect in the short stature homeobox-containing gene (SHOX gene) comprising administering to a subject in need thereof a pharmaceutically effective amount of a natriuretic peptide (ANP or BNP).

19. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 18, further comprising administering a pharmaceutically effective amount of a growth protein.

20. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 19, wherein said subject is a human subject and said growth hormone is human growth hormone.

21. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 18, further comprising administering a pharmaceutically effective amount of a SHOX protein.

22. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 21, wherein said SHOX protein is a SHOX I protein.

23. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 22, wherein said SHOX I protein is selected from the group consisting of SHOX A protein and SHOX B protein.

24. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 18, wherein said method stimulates or increases human growth.

25. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 18, wherein said subject has idiopathic short stature, Turner syndrome or Leri-Weill syndrome.

26. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 18, wherein the natriuretic peptide is nesiritide.

Claims 27-30 (Canceled).

31. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 18, further comprising identifying a subject as having a genetic defect in the human growth gene SHOX using a nucleic acid molecule capable of hybridizing to the SHOX gene.